

CLAIMS:

1. A method of inventorying data carriers (2) by means of a communication station,
wherein said communication station and each data carrier (2) are brought into communicative connection, and
5 wherein each data carrier (2) brought into communicative connection with the communication station generates a response signal (IDS) enabling the inventorying of the data carrier (2) after at least one operational condition has been fulfilled and supplies said response signal (IDS) using a transmission start moment that can be chosen from a plurality of transmission start moments (t5, t6), and
10 wherein each data carrier (2) before providing its response signal (IDS) tests whether another data carrier (2) is already providing its response signal (IDS), and wherein each data carrier (2) discontinues the provision of its response signal (IDS) if another data carrier (2) is already giving its response signal (IDS).
- 15 2. A method as claimed in claim 1,
wherein each data carrier (2) already before generating its response signal (IDS) tests whether another data carrier (2) is giving its response signal (IDS), and
wherein each data carrier (2) discontinues the generation of its response signal (IDS) if another data carrier (2) is already giving its response signal (IDS).
- 20 3. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the response signal (IDS) given is an identification signal.
4. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the transmission start moment is
25 selected by a random principle.
5. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the selected transmission start moment is shifted in time by a selectable discrete delay period (TD) with respect to a command signal end (t4) of a command signal (CCO) given by the communication station.

6. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the number of selectable transmission start moments (t_5, t_6) is greater than the number of data carriers.

5 7. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein a data carrier (2) that has given a response signal (IDS) can be set to an idle state by the communication station, in which idle state no response signal (IDS) is provided.

8. A data carrier (2), which data carrier (2) is designed for contactless
10 communication with a communication station and which comprises an integrated circuit (3), which integrated circuit (3) comprises the following means: response signal generation means (44) for generating a response signal (IDS), start moment selection means (45) by which a transmission start moment can be selected from a plurality of transmission start moments (t_5, t_6), and response signal recognition means (20) designed for recognizing a
15 response signal (IDS) given by another data carrier (2) and for generating and delivering a response signal recognition signal (ASDS), and wherein delivery decision means (50) are provided which release or block a delivery of the response signal (IDS) in dependence on the response signal recognition signal (ASDS) and the transmission start moment.

20 9. A data carrier (2) as claimed in claim 8, wherein the response signal generation means (44) are formed by identification signal generation means.

10. A data carrier (2) as claimed in claim 8 or 9, wherein the response signal recognition means (20) are designed for recognizing a carrier signal (CS).

25 11. A data carrier (2) as claimed in claim 8 or 9, wherein the response signal recognition means (20) are designed for recognizing a modulated carrier signal (MCCO) and for this purpose comprise demodulation means which are designed for demodulating a modulated carrier signal (MCCO).

30 12. An integrated circuit (3) for a data carrier (2), which data carrier (2) is designed for contactless communication with a communication station, said integrated circuit (3) comprising the following means: response signal generation means (44) for generating a response signal (IDS), start moment selection means (45) by which a transmission start

moment can be selected from a plurality of transmission start moments (t5, t6), and response signal recognition means (20) designed for recognizing a response signal (IDS) given by another data carrier (2) and for generating and delivering a response signal recognition signal (ASDS), and wherein delivery decision means (50) are provided which release or block a 5 delivery of the response signal (IDS) in dependence on the response signal recognition signal (ASDS) and the transmission start moment.

13. An integrated circuit (3) as claimed in claim 12, wherein the response signal generation means (44) are formed by identification signal generation means.

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14. An integrated circuit (3) as claimed in claim 12 or 13, wherein the response signal recognition means (20) are designed for recognizing a carrier signal (CS).

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15. An integrated circuit (3) as claimed in claim 12 or 13, wherein the response signal recognition means (20) are designed for recognizing a modulated carrier signal (MCCO) and for this purpose comprise demodulation means which are designed for demodulating a modulated carrier signal (MCCO).